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THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY was established in 1869 to promote the Natural Sciences and to diffuse a general knowledge of them among the people, and it is in cordial coöperation with all similar institutions throughout the world. The Museum authorities are dependent upon private subscriptions and the dues from members for procuring needed additions to the collections and for carrying on explorations in America and other parts of the world.

The membership fees are,

Annual Members.....	\$ 10	Fellows.....	\$ 500
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All money received from membership fees is used for increasing the collections and for developing the educational work of the Museum.

The Museum is open free to the public on every day in the year.





THE HAITIAN SOLENODON.  
From the mounted group in the American Museum.

# The American Museum Journal

VOL. VIII

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No. 2

## THE RARE INSECT-EATER, SOLENODON.

THE illustration on the opposite page has been made from the mounted specimens of *Solenodon*, the skins and skeletons of which were received at the Museum in June, 1907, as noted in the JOURNAL for last October. The *Solenodon* is one of the rarest animals known and will soon be absolutely exterminated by the mongoose, which was introduced into the island to get rid of snakes.

The genus *Solenodon* is the sole member of the family *Solenodontidae*, and only two species are known. One of these (*Solenodon cubanus*) is confined to the Island of Cuba, where it is known as the *Almiqui*, while the other (*Solenodon paradoxus*) occurs only on the Island of Haiti, where, according to Mr. A. H. Verrill, who collected our specimens, it is known to the natives as the "Orso," "Milqui," "Homigero" or "Juron." The name "Agouta" is also applied to the animal, while the English-speaking negroes from the British West Indies call it a "Ground Hog." The animal is classed with the *Insectivora*.

The *Solenodon* is about as large as a rabbit and is singularly like the opossum in appearance. It has a long cylindrical snout, a long scaly tail and five toes on each foot, the forefeet being provided with long claws. The head and body are covered with rather thin coarse hair, which becomes thinner toward the rear and is nearly absent from the hind quarters. In color the coat, or pelage, is reddish-brown on the head and neck, changing to a rusty brown on the body. The animal's cry is a loud piercing peculiar note.

In the *American Journal of Science* for July, 1907, Mr. Verrill has published a short description of the animal in the course of which he says, "In its habits the *Solenodon* resembles a hog, rooting in the earth and cultivated grounds, tearing rotten logs and trees to pieces with its powerful front claws, and feeding on ants, grubs, insects, vegetables, reptiles and fruit, and at times proving destructive to poultry. On

several occasions it has been known to enter the houses in search of roaches and other vermin, and has been captured in rat-traps.

"It is strictly nocturnal, and spends the day in caves, holes in the coral limestone rocks and in hollow trees and logs. It is a slow, stupid creature. It is unable to run rapidly, but shambles along with the zig-zag, sidewise motions of a plantigrade. It is doubtless owing to this that it obtained the native name of "Orso" (bear).

"Its long snout and stout front feet, with their curved claws, and its thick, short neck prove impediments to forward progress. According to the natives it is incapable of running straight. They also claim that when pursued it frequently trips itself and tumbles heels over head. When hunted with dogs, it thrusts its head into the nearest hole or shelter and allows itself to be captured without resistance."

Five specimens of the Cuban form have found their way into the museums of Europe and America; while only one example of the Haitian *Solenodon* has been recorded, and this consists merely of a skin and skull which were sent to St. Petersburg in 1833 or before. The specimens recently secured by the American Museum are of this extremely rare Haitian form and are a gift from President Jesup. They were procured from the Kny-Scheerer Company, which had sent several expeditions to the island for the animal before that under Mr. Verrill was successful. The skeleton and soft parts of this *Solenodon* have been entirely unknown to science, but our recent acquisition will enable us to publish a full description of the bones.

#### A STONE IDOL FROM TAHITI.

EARLY visitors to the Society Islands, including Tahiti, state that the natives worshiped many different idols. The descriptions indicate that the images were usually carved from wood and that stone idols were rare, even at the time of the discovery of the islands by white men. The Museum therefore is fortunate in acquiring the ancient stone idol from Tahiti which recently came as a gift from G. Archibald McTarvish, Esq., and which is illustrated on the opposite page. A human head and arms have been roughly carved on the upper end of the stone, otherwise it has been but slightly worked. The image stands 18½ inches high and weighs 93 pounds.



A STONE IDOL FROM TAHITI.  
Height,  $18\frac{1}{2}$  inches; weight, 93 pounds.





PETROGLYPH NEAR SHOSHONE, WYOMING.  
The carving is about eighteen inches long.



## AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE IN WYOMING.

**L**AST summer the writer made an interesting archaeological reconnaissance of the southern half of the State of Wyoming. This region is near the center of a vast neglected field for archaeological research to which attention was called in the Boas Anniversary Volume of 1907.

The neglected area extends from the arctic region on the north to the Mandan country of Dakota and the well known archaeological field of the Mississippi Valley on the east, to the Cliff Dwellings on the south and to the rich territory of the Santa Catalina Islands, the Sacramento Valley of California, the plateau region of Washington and British Columbia on the west. The area is so vast and the problems are so numerous, that no one institution, much less any individual, should hope to do more than begin the work.

Among the problems to be solved, the following may be mentioned: When did man first appear in the region? Judging from the results of exploration in other places, it may take many years of the combined efforts of all who are interested before extensive evidence on this point is discovered. What was the culture of the first inhabitants? Was there more than one culture in the area, either at various places or during different periods? How was the culture affected by the introduction of the horse? No doubt the coming of the horse to a people whose only beast of burden had been the dog caused a great advance in their general culture, as it would enable them to travel further in search of food, to possess and transport more property and to become somewhat more independent of the scanty water supply of the region.

The larger part of the area was inhabited by tribes of Indians belonging to the Athabascan, Algonkin, Siouan and Shoshonean groups. An examination of the archaeological remains will throw light upon the early history of these people and their migrations.

The central portion of the area was the home of the American bison, upon which the Indians, when first met by the whites, depended not only for food, but also for the material for clothing, moccasins, covers for tipis and ferry boats or rafts, backgrounds upon which to paint calendars and other things of like character. The horns and bones furnished material for various articles and implements, among which may be mentioned spoons, bowls and skin scrapers.

After all the vaunted superiority of the white race, our people today are holding their cattle much as the Indians held the buffalo. For instance, the Indians held the herds at the North Platte River in order that the tribes living north of the river might be able to get the buffalo all through the year, for if left to themselves, the herd would have traveled farther to the south in winter. Our round-up and general treatment of the cattle of the plains, resembles today and always has resembled in wildness and cruelty the buffalo hunt of the Red Man.

In the eastern part of Wyoming, some extensive quarries, where the prehistoric people found quartzite and jasper, out of which to make chipped implements, have been known for some years. These were visited, and specimens and photographs were secured.

In the same general region other extensive quarries were found, some of which were acres in extent, and notes were taken of still other quarries known to the local ranchers. Nearly everywhere in Wyoming, but more particularly in the eastern part, circles of stones marking the sites of ancient tipis were found. They may be counted by the hundred in the southern part of Converse County. These stones were no doubt used to hold down the skin covering of the tipi. Stones are still employed for this purpose by the Blackfoot Indians in Montana, only a short distance to the north.

Pictographs painted in red and black and petroglyphs cut or pecked on the cliffs were noticed, particularly in the vicinity of the Wind River Mountains. Some of these represent horses (see the illustration on page 22), proving them to have been made since the white man brought the horse to America, others represented the buffalo.

Steatite pots in the form of an egg, and apparently of a type unknown in other parts of America, were noticed, especially in western Wyoming. True pottery was rare. Less than a dozen sites were found where it occurred, and these were all well towards the southern part of the State. They probably mark the northern limits of pottery in this portion of the area.

In the vicinity of Hammond in the Algonkin area, caves were found into which the wolves had dragged bones of cattle, sheep and other animals, and in front of which there are much village debris, many tipi circles and some petroglyphs. These caves probably contain many remains, and this vicinity, as well as the western slope of the Wind River Mountains, would probably repay detailed exploration. Several

months' work in the latter region would be sure to enable the explorer to secure a collection of photographs, illustrating the art of the vicinity, as executed in the form of petroglyphs.

It would seem to be the duty of the students of the Cliff Dwelling and Pueblo region to explore northward into this vast neglected area, in an attempt at finding the northern limit of that culture. The students of the archæology of the Mississippi Valley, have a similar duty to perform in determining the western limits of the agricultural culture of that valley, while the students of California owe it to the world to investigate the eastern portion of that State. The eastern limits of the plateau culture of southern British Columbia and Washington should also be defined.

HARLAN I. SMITH.

#### DEPARTMENT OF MINERALOGY.

THE mineral accessions for 1907 were, for the most part, secured by means of the income of the Bruce endowment. Some of the new specimens, *viz.*: the interesting beryl crystals from North Carolina, the superb polybasite group from Mexico, the unique native copper from Arizona and the splendid Brazilian andorite have already been recorded in the pages of the JOURNAL, but others are as worthy of mention. An excellent display of the attractive opaque pink beryls from Haddam, Conn., was made by Mr. S. C. Gillette at the Progress of Science exhibition of the New York Academy of Sciences last winter, and five beautiful and instructive crystals were purchased from him for the cabinet. They are prisms with base and terminal pyramid — the latter in varying stages of development — in a quartz matrix. A specimen of autunite — the yellow uranate of lime — from Mitchell Co., N. C., has interest, and a hand specimen of the uraninite of Central City, Colorado, which carries gold and has been studied by Crooke, Becquerel and Curie on account of its richness in radium, deserves mention. Two light-blue simple crystals of beryl from Mesa Granda, Col., massive thalénite from Sweden, mangano-tantalite from western Australia, heulandite from Norway, the rare mercury oxides terlinguaite and eglestonite from Texas, a remarkable baddeleyite (?) from Brazil, thorianite from Ceylon, cobaltite from Temiskaming and a huge dyscra-

site, or antimonial silver, from the same famous locality, humite (a recent determination) from Franklin Furnace, N. J., with two really admirable menaccanites, in solid, well-developed and distorted crystals from Norway, embrace the most important purchases.

An exchange of some interest was made with Prof. T. Wada of Japan for Japanese minerals and one with Mr. Otto F. Pfordte for Nipissing specimens of silver and silver ores.

Mr. F. A. Canfield donated an excellent native lead from Sweden, and a characteristic chrysotile from the Grand Canyon of the Colorado was received from the Hance Asbestos Mining Co. A representation of the iron sulphates (copiapite, coquimbite, amarantite and others) from Atacama, Chile, was given by the distinguished collector and mineralogist, Mr. John H. Caswell, and through Prof. James Douglas there were received from Dr. L. D. Ricketts two sections of colored stalactites from Bisbee, Arizona. One of the superb amethyst-colored calcite crystals from Sterlingbush, St. Lawrence Co., N.Y., which formed a prominent feature in the mineralogical series at the Academy exhibition already referred to has been received from Mr. H. P. Whitlock of Albany.

Several additions have been made to the New York Mineralogical Club's collection illustrating the mineralogy of Manhattan Island and to the Museum series showing the basement rocks underlying the city.

L. P. GRATACAP.

#### A MODEL OF THE LARGEST DIAMOND KNOWN.

THERE has recently been placed on exhibition in the Hall of Mineralogy (Case 25, north end, east side) a natural-sized model in glass of the great Cullinan diamond which the Museum has received as a gift from the Premier Transvaal Diamond Mining Company, Limited, Johannesburg, South Africa. The Cullinan Diamond has received its name in honor of the Chairman, or President, of the Premier Company in whose ground it was found. The stone was discovered by Mr. Wells, surface manager for the company, in the so-called "yellow ground" some eighteen feet below the surface. Its net weight was 3,024 $\frac{1}{4}$  carats (1 pound, 6 ounces avoirdupois) which is more than three times the weight of the largest diamond previously known,

the celebrated Jagersfontein stone discovered in 1893. The Cullinan stone, which is of perfect color and lustre, is bounded by eight surfaces, four of which are faces of the original octahedral crystal, and the other four are cleavage surfaces, parallel to the face of the octahedron. The size and position of these cleavage surfaces indicate that considerable portions, amounting perhaps to more than half of the original crystal, have been separated from it and lost. This is the gem which the Transvaal Colony recently presented to King Edward VII.

On account of the great size of the stone special machinery must be made for cutting it, and it is estimated that from eighteen months to two years will be needed for reducing the gem to final size and shape. A London expert is said to have expressed the opinion that the diamond will be cut into three stones, one of a thousand carats and two of eighty carats each.

#### A COLLECTION OF MEXICAN AND CENTRAL AMERICAN BEETLES.

THROUGH the generosity of F. DuCane Godman, Esq., who is a well-known English scientist and is the editor of the famous work entitled "Biologia Centrali-Americana," the Museum recently has received as a donation a valuable collection of beetles from Mexico and Central America. This collection is of unusual scientific importance, since it is part of the material upon which the volumes of this publication pertaining to the Coleoptera have been based. The collection contains more than 4,000 specimens representing 1,679 species, many of which were described as new to science in the "Biologia" by Messrs. David Sharp, Henry Walter Bates, Henry Stephen Gorham, George C. Champion, J. S. Baly, Martin Jacoby and other specialists on beetles. The authoritative identifications of the species in this collection make it of particular value to students of Coleoptera, and it will be of great assistance in the labeling of much hitherto unidentified material in the possession of the Museum and in private collections.

THE Museum has been fortunate recently in securing, through purchase, a number of Orang-Utan skins from Borneo. The collection contains the skin and entire skeleton of one unusually large individual.

## THE MUSEUM BULLETIN FOR 1907

THE twenty-third volume of the Bulletin of the American Museum was issued during the year 1907, and is the largest single volume of the series that has been published, containing about one thousand pages of text matter and fifty-four plates. The wide range of activity of our scientific staff in research in the various departments of natural science is indicated by the titles of the thirty-six articles comprising the volume, as given in the following list. The articles are technical in character, but many of them have much general as well as scientific interest. They are published separately and, like the complete volume, may be obtained from the librarian.

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#### MUSEUM NEWS NOTES.

THROUGH the generosity of Hon. Mason Mitchell, American Consul at Chungking, China, the Museum has secured a small, but valuable, collection of mammals from the border of Tibet. Comparatively little is known of the zoölogy of this region, and the Mitchell collection contains several forms which are apparently new to scientists. Two skins of the Takin (*Budoscas taxicolor*), an extremely rare antelope, are of particular interest. Mr. Mitchell is probably the first white man to kill this animal, of which no mounted specimens exist in the museums of Europe or America.

THREE Tibetan scrolls were among the material presented to the Museum by Mr. Mitchell. In a letter regarding them, dated Chungking, China, July 16, 1907, Mr. Mitchell says:—"The scrolls are very rare and seldom to be secured, as the Lamas will not sell them; they are too sacred. In the summer of 1906, the Yellow Lamas killed four French priests. The soldiers sent against them put the Lamas to flight and looted the temple. These scrolls were later obtained from the soldiers."

SEVERAL interesting specimens from the Sakai, the aborigines of the Malay Peninsula, have been presented by Mr. Caspar Whitney, of this

city, who collected them himself. The collection consists of an ornamented piece of bamboo, which is worn in a hole through the septum of the nose, a wooden instrument used in making bark cloth, and a number of pieces described by Mr. Whitney as a Sakai wardrobe. This "wardrobe" is made up of several bands made from the inner bark of a tree, bunches of leaves and an ear-ornament. The broader bands are worn by the women about the hips, and the bunches of leaves are suspended therefrom. The narrow strips are forehead-bands. The ear-ornament is a bunch of grass, one end of which is encircled by a broad ring of bamboo. This is worn in the lobe of the ear with the bunch of grass extending forward.

THE Gem collection has been enriched by a wonderful specimen of crystallized gold from California presented to the Museum at Christmas time by J. Pierpont Morgan, Esq. An arborescent aggregate of perfect little octahedral crystals of pure gold is daintily held in the midst of a cluster of clear, prismatic crystals of quartz, forming what many experts consider to be the most beautiful specimen of the kind in any collection.

THE following additions to the membership of the Museum have been made between December 1, 1907, and January 15, 1908: Fellow, MISS CAROLA WOERISHOFFER; Life Members, EDWARD C. BOHDE, CHARLES E. SLOCUM, M. D., LL. D.; Annual Members, WILLIAM N. HOAG, A. G. WHEELER, JR., JOHN M. CLARK, T. FERDINAND WILCOX, W. H. GOADBY, JOHN G. MCINTYRE, ROBERT MULLER, JR., M. SCHUYLER SMITH, MISS GERTRUDE WHITING, MISS EMILY REDMOND, MRS. MAY VALENTINE FISHER, P. R. G. SJÖSTRÖM, BERNHARD B. AMROM, DAVID M. HUNTER, THEODORE WENTZ, BERNARD F. AMEND, HENRY E. MEEKER, DOUGLAS ALEXANDER.

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#### LECTURE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

##### PEOPLES' COURSE.

The subjects of the lectures to be given in February are as follows:

Tuesdays at 8 P. M. Illustrated with stereopticon views.

February 4.—"France: Her History Written in Stone." By Louis F. Berry.

February 11.—“The Highlands and Islands of Scotland.” By Clinton G. Abbott.

February 18.—“The Homes of the Poets.” By Sutton Fletcher.

February 25.—“Fighting the Polar Ice.” By Anthony Fiala.

Saturdays at 8 P. M. Illustrated with experiments. Lectures by Professor Ernest R. von Nardroff.

February 1.—“The Electric Current: Its Magnetic Effects.”

February 8.—“The Electric Current: Its Inductive Effects.”

February 15.—“Cathode Rays, and Röntgen Rays.”

February 22.—“Wireless Telegraphy.”

February 29.—“Radium.”

These lectures are given in coöperation with the Department of Education of the City of New York. They are open free to the public and no tickets are required for admittance, except in the case of children, who, on account of the regulations of the Department of Education, will be admitted only on presentation of the ticket of a Member of the Museum.

The doors open at 7:30 o'clock and close when the lectures begin.

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#### MEETINGS OF SOCIETIES.

Public meetings of the New York Academy of Sciences and Affiliated Societies are held at the Museum according to the following schedule:

On Monday evenings, The New York Academy of Sciences:

First Mondays, Section of Geology and Mineralogy.

Second Mondays, Section of Biology.

Third Mondays, Section of Astronomy, Physics and Chemistry.

Fourth Mondays, Section of Anthropology and Psychology.

On Tuesday evenings, as announced:

The Linnaean Society, The New York Entomological Society and  
The Torrey Botanical Club.

On Wednesday evenings, as announced:

The New York Mineralogical Club.

On Fridays evenings, as announced:

The New York Microscopical Society.

The programs of the meetings of the respective organizations are published in the weekly *Bulletin* of the New York Academy of Sciences and sent to the members of the several societies. Members of the Museum on making request of the Director will be provided with the *Bulletin* as issued.

## Scientific Staff.

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# The American Museum Journal

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